

Name:



Leader's Guide

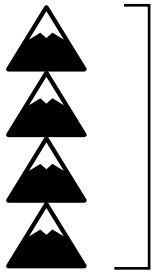
Giving for Global Mission

Updated May 2023

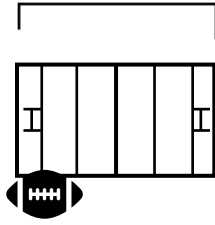
Preamble: This study must be set in the context of God's gracious, generous giving to us. Consider reading a grace-focused verse (e.g. Rom 5:8, 1 Jn 4:11-12, 19) and reminding participants that although God gives us far more than money— for He who was rich became poor so that we might be rich (2 Corinthians 8:9) as He continually gives himself and every good gift (1 Tim 6:17-19; LIFE: Labour, Influence, Finance, Expertise)— money matters. Did you know that Jesus spoke more about money than sex, violence, or even heaven and hell?

1. Do you think Christians are good at giving financially to missions? How do you react to these claims:

“Christians make up 33% of the world’s population, receive 53% of the world’s annual income, and spend 98% of it on themselves.”



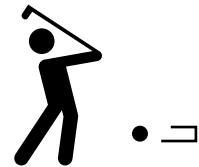
Height of 4 Mt. Kosciuszko
Money Christians Earn
(AUD\$63 Trillion annual income)



Length of a Rugby Field
Money Christians Give
(1.8% to all Christian Causes)



Basketball Goal Height
Money Going to Foreign Missions
(only 5% of what is given)



Diameter of a Golf ball
To Reach the Unreached
(only 1% of Missions Giving)

***Not to Scale**

Adapted from The Travelling Team (thetravelingteam.org/articles/practical-steps-to-grow-in-giving-to-missions)

This question sends participants into the topic with a benchmark to consider. The assertions come, respectively, from Barrett and Johnson (2001) and The Travelling Team that also asserts:

“American Christians spend 95% of offerings on home-based ministry, 4.5% on cross-cultural efforts in already reached people groups, and [0].5% to reach the unreached.”

For a helpful caution, see thegospelcoalition.org/article/case-for-accurate-appeals-in-missions



Reductionistic statements often miss complexities: e.g. define Christian, less money does not necessarily equate with less value (a \$30 Bible and a \$30K minivan), missionaries (especially local workers) cost less than infrastructure, business facilitated mission is unaccounted for, and indirect giving is still connected. Nevertheless, like many generalisations, these statements do capture something significant: we spend so much (too much? far too much?) on ourselves.

2. What makes giving financially for global mission difficult?

3. How competently do you manage money? Because, far from a merely 'secular skill,' managing money matters for mission. Where do you invest your money? Because 'where your treasure is, there your heart will be also' (Matthew 6:21). Money both measures and moves the desires of our heart.

Managing Money for Global Mission

Statement	Rate from 1 - 10 Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree
I manage money well	
I have a budget	
I have godly financial role models	
I am content with what I have	
I waste money	
I invest thoughtfully	
I want to be rich	
I spend selfishly	
My accountant could tell I'm a Christian	
I invest in caring for my family	
I spend short-sightedly	
I invest in caring for my church community	
I know how much my church gives to mission	
I know who my church supports financially	
I repay those who work to teach me the gospel	
I invest in gospel proclamation	
I invest in reaching the Less Reached	
I invest in resourcing the Less Resourced	
My accountant could tell that I care about global mission.	

Participants can complete this checklist individually within a few minutes. They can then be asked what questions they had and how they felt about their 'results.'

4. Beyond providing for family, the church (and through the church the weak), and those who teach us the gospel, why should we give for global mission? (cf. Romans 10:12-15, 1 Corinthians 9, 2 Corinthians 8-9, Philippians 4:10-20)

In this question, participants engage with what God says. Although many passages pertain to the topic—including Matthew 6:19-24, Luke 21:1-4, Acts 20:32-35, 2 Corinthians 11:7-12, 3 John 5-8—these bracketed passages have been selected for the sake of time. For shorter sessions, select fewer passages (Romans and Philippians/2 Corinthians) or focus on key verses such as 1 Corinthians 9:14.

Alternatively, the leader can share pre-prepared insights. For example:

- Non-Christians won't pay for people to hear about Jesus.
- In God's model, missionaries must be sent (Romans 10:13-15) and gospel workers get their living from the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:14). Note Paul's example in 1 Corinthians 9:8-18 and 2 Corinthians 11:7-12 and Philippians 4:10-20.
- A culture of generosity generates a culture of going. If I'm experiencing the goodness of God in giving small things, then I can trust him with big things. If I'm not confident Christian community can/will meet my needs, will I go? Can I go? One missionary said: "Many key initiatives in mission & ministry are unable to move forward because of lack of funds. Or ministry and mission workers are unable to engage actively in ministry because they lack the support to do this (and have to find other work to help pay the bills). Finances is a huge issue in global mission."
- To provide for the poor. As David Williams at St. Andrew's Hall says: "Church is planting is the answer to world poverty."
- Giving globally is good for us (2 Corinthians 8-9).
- Giving globally is good for the lost from all nations.
- So we can grow in generosity. As Kent Hughes in his *Disciplines of a Godly Man* says: Sow an act, reap a habit. Sow a habit, reap a character. Sow a character, reap a future. "If I keep handling possessions like this for the next ten or twenty years, what sort of character will I develop and what kind of person will I become?"

5. What wisdom do you have about giving for global mission?

This is an opportunity to gather wisdom from the group.

Some further suggestions include:

- A little is better than nothing. In fact, a little can be more when we consider percentages like the poor widow.
- What are you giving now? Is coffee more important to you than mission? And if you retort that coffee is not a want but a need, note how the poor widow and Macedonians wanted to give even what they needed. Could you match your expenditure on subscriptions with global missions giving?
- What could you give up? Could you fast and give the money from that meal? Cut down a weekly coffee? Change to a cheaper gym? As C.S. Lewis say: 'There are things one cannot have and things foregone when one indulges in grace giving... if our charities do not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say that they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our charitable expenditure excludes them.'
- Give in percentages, for percentages scale with income. If you give 10%, could you give 4% to church, 3% to local mission, 3% to global mission?
Note the Wesley story in Appendix 1 (Last page).
- Regular support is best because it's easier to depend on the dependable. But regular support has its own issues: when we set we can forget. Could you make this process manual or set a reminder for days money leaves your account?
- Invest yourself (praying, caring) and not just your money.
- Margins facilitate meeting needs, but be careful to make your money work.
- What makes it hard to give? What would make it easier to give? Make a budget, overcome simple obstacles and make it rewarding.

6. What do you want to give? What could you give up today to give more?

If possible, have participants commit to one caring action (circle/highlight) within the next week and follow up for sustained change.

Appendix 1: Resources

Wesley's story: ¹

His position usually paid him at least £30 a year—more than enough money for a single man to live on. He seems to have enjoyed his relative prosperity while teaching, spending his money on playing cards, tobacco, and brandy. One incident that happened to him at Oxford changed his perspective on money. He had just finished buying some pictures for his room when one of the chambermaids came to his door. It was a Winter day and he noticed that she had only a thin linen gown to wear for protection against the cold. He reached into his pocket to give her some money for a coat, and found he had little left. It struck him that the Lord was not pleased with how he had spent his money. He asked himself: Will Thy Master say “Well done, good and faithful stewards?” Thou hast adorned thy walls with the money that might have screened this poor creature from the cold! O justice! O mercy! Are not these pictures the blood of this poor maid? (from On Dress)

Perhaps as a result of this incident, in 1731 Wesley began to limit his expenses so he would have more money to give to the poor. He records that one year his income was £30, and his living expenses £28, so he had £2 to give away. The next year his income doubled, but he still lived on £28 and gave £32 away. In the third year his income jumped to £90, again he lived on £28, giving £62 away. The fourth year he made £120, lived again on £28 and gave £92 to the poor.

Wesley preached that Christians should not merely tithe, but give away all extra income once the family and creditors were taken care of. He believed that with increasing income, the Christian's standard of giving should increase, not his standard of living. He began this practice at Oxford and he continued it throughout his life. Even when his income rose into the thousands of pounds, he lived simply and quickly gave his surplus money away. One year his income was slightly over £1,400; he gave all away save £30. He was afraid of laying up treasures on earth, so the money went out in charity as quickly as it came in in income. He reports that he never had as much as £100 at one time.

¹ Excerpt taken from christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue-19/four-lessons-on-money.html